



Cannabis Legalization in Maryland

cannabis.maryland.gov



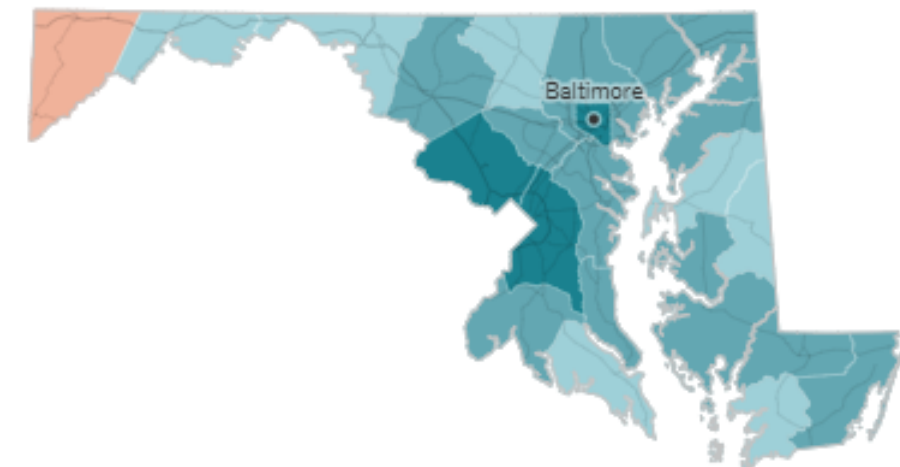
Question 4: Adult-use Legalization

Question: *“Do you favor the legalization of the use of cannabis by an individual who is at least 21 years of age on or after July 1, 2023, in the State of Maryland?”*

(a) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, on or after July 1, 2023, an individual in the State who is at least 21 years old may use and possess cannabis.

(b) The General Assembly shall, by law, provide for the use, distribution, possession, regulation, and taxation of cannabis within the State.

| Latest results from Dec. 8 | | 100% OF VOTES IN <div></div> | |
|---|-----------|------------------------------|-------------|
| Answer | Votes | Pct. | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For | 1,302,188 | 67.2% | <div></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Against | 635,582 | 32.8 | <div></div> |
| Total reported | 1,937,770 | | |



What was the impact of the referendum?

Effective July 1, 2023, individuals 21 years or older may:

- Legally possess up to (1) 1.5 ounces of flower, (2) 12 g of cannabis concentrate, or (3) 750 mg delta-9 THC; and
- Grow up to two cannabis plants in their residence (indoors, in secure area, out of public view)

By July 1, 2024, DPSCS must “expunge” all cases in which possession of cannabis is the only charge (possession of less than 10 g)

Establishes the following:

- Cannabis Public Health Fund and Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council
- Cannabis Business Assistance Fund
- Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund

HB 556/SB516: CANNABIS REFORM ACT

& WHAT CHANGES COME WITH IT

WHAT IS THE CANNABIS REFORM ACT?

In April 2023, Maryland General Assembly passed HB 556/SB 516, emergency legislation that authorizes adult-use *sales* beginning on July 1, 2023. Other major bill provisions include:

- Establishing the *Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA)* to license and regulate the new industry.
- Authorizing existing medical cannabis operators to “convert” their licensed to medical- and adult-use licenses by paying a conversion fee.
- Allocating conversion fees to the *Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund* for the purpose of funding community initiatives in jurisdictions and regions that have been disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition and cannabis-related arrests.
- Authorizing MCA to award standard and micro licenses to grow, process, and dispense cannabis across at least three licensing rounds.
- Establishing new license categories, including on-site consumption and incubator space licenses.
- Evaluating license applications on a pass-fail basis and placing all eligible applicants into a lottery for award of licenses.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PATIENTS AND CONSUMERS?



Medical

- Continue to purchase tax-free cannabis (with written certification and MCA registration)
- Continue to have access to higher dosage items, which will be restricted for adult consumers
- Dispensaries will have dedicated patient hours and/or dedicated lanes to prioritize medical patients
- Ability to purchase up to 120 grams per month
- Medical patients registered with the Maryland Cannabis Administration can cultivate two additional plants, for a total of four plants; not to exceed more than four plants in a given residence.



Adult-Use

- On July 1st, a person may purchase cannabis or cannabis products from a licensed dispensary with a government-issued photo ID that demonstrates they are 21 years or older.
- On July 1st, adults 21 or older may possess up to 1.5 ounces of cannabis flower (42.5 grams), 12 grams of concentrated cannabis, or a total amount of cannabis products that does not exceed 750 mg THC. This amount is known as the "personal use amount."
- Adult-use Cannabis products will be subject to a 9 % sales tax (the same as alcohol)

Key Dates of Interest

*Note the first round will be exclusively for applicants who qualify as a social equity applicant



July 1, 2023

Existing Maryland medical cannabis businesses who chose to convert will be authorized to cultivate, manufacture, or dispense cannabis or cannabis products for consumers 21 years of age or older.



July-August 2023

The Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA), in partnership with the new Office of Social Equity, will conduct outreach, training, and guidance on the application process for individuals interested in obtaining a cannabis license



Fall 2023

30-day application period for individuals and businesses interested in applying for a standard or micro cannabis license in Round 1.



Fall/Winter 2023

MCA reviews applications and conducts a lottery for Round 1 applicants



By January 1, 2024

MCA begins to award conditional cannabis licenses



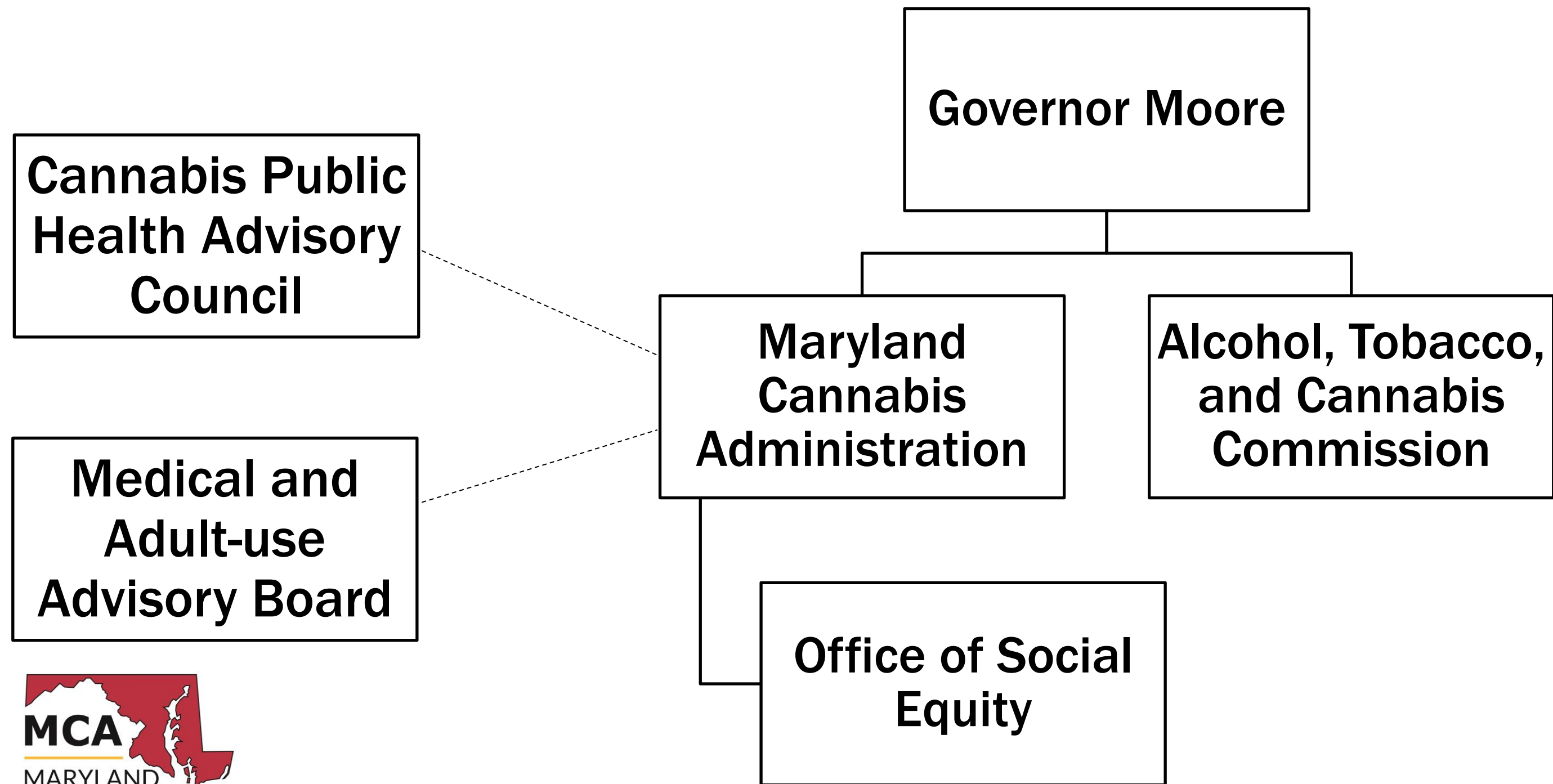
On or After May 1, 2024

MCA announces Round 2 for standard and micro cannabis licenses, including on-site consumption licenses.

Cannabis Regulation in Maryland

A modern office interior with large potted plants, wooden desks, and ergonomic chairs. The image is overlaid with a dark green semi-transparent layer, and the title 'Cannabis Regulation in Maryland' is written in white text across the center. The office has large windows, a high ceiling with exposed pipes, and a comfortable seating area with sofas in the background.

Regulatory Structure



Maryland Cannabis Administration

- Independent state agency led by a Director appointed by the Governor
- Authorized to award an additional 500+ cannabis licenses across grower, processor, dispensary, incubator, and on-site consumption categories

Primary cannabis-related responsibilities:

1. License cannabis growers, processors, and dispensaries, register ancillary businesses, patients, caregivers, certifying providers and clinical directors
2. Inspect businesses and laboratories for compliance with regulatory requirements
3. Hold administrative hearings and levy penalties
4. Troubleshoot any patient registration/access issues
5. Promulgate and implement all programmatic regulations, including establishing health and safety standards for the cultivation, manufacture, and sale of cannabis
6. Educate stakeholders on cannabis; laws and regulations governing its cultivation, manufacture, and sale; and safe and responsible use

Alcohol, Tobacco and Cannabis Commission

- Independent commission led by an Executive Director appointed by the Governor
- Commission made up of 7 members (one with cannabis research and policy experience) who develop best practices for regulating the cannabis industry and implementing public health measures relating to cannabis
- Field enforcement division consists of sworn law enforcement officers

Primary cannabis-related responsibilities:

1. Conduct enforcement against unlicensed operators importing, manufacturing, transporting or distributing cannabis in the State
2. Enforce any aspect of Title 36, Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis Article, as authorized by MCA through an MOU.
3. Make recommendations to MCA on how best to safely and securely regulate the adult-use cannabis industry.

Advisory Bodies

Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council

- Must study and make recommendations regarding cannabis regulation to the General Assembly, including data-driven approaches on:
 - Best practices and promotion of public health and preventing youth use, misuse and addiction
 - Data collection and reporting that measures the impact of cannabis consumption and legalization
 - Impact of cannabis legalization on health of individuals < 21
 - Initiatives to prevent cannabis use by individuals < 21, including school-based programs
 - Public health campaigns on advertising, labeling, product testing, and quality control
 - Training for healthcare providers
 - Any other issues that advance public health related to cannabis use and legalization
- Made up of elected officials, executive agency officials (MDH, MDA, etc.) and public health and cannabis subject matter experts

Advisory Board on Medical and Adult-use Cannabis

- Consider all matters presented to it by the MCA or General Assembly
- Provide recommendations to MCA and General Assembly on cannabis rules and regulations
- Made up primarily of industry stakeholders (licensees, testing labs, healthcare providers, advocates)

Impact on Howard



Howard County

Currently, seven (7) licensed cannabis dispensaries are operating in Howard. Each converted their licenses to a medical and adult-use license.

- **In Round #1 MCA is authorized to award up to 80 additional dispensary licenses statewide. Based on population and market demand, Howard may be eligible for up to 3 additional dispensaries.**

Currently, one (1) grower and processor is operating in Howard County. This business converted its license to a medical and adult-use license.

- **Additional grower and processor awards will be made by geographic region, not county.**

Additional local considerations:

- **May establish reasonable zoning requirements (cannot prohibit)**
- **Receive 5% of the cannabis tax revenue, with allocations being made based on the percentage of revenue collected from that county (more dispensaries = greater share of revenue)**
- **May not impose licensing, operating, or other fees that are disproportionately greater than those imposed on other businesses**
- **May not impose a local tax on cannabis**

Educational Materials



Public and Consumer Education

- Began “*Hey Maryland, Did You Know?*” Campaign in late-March
- Focus was radio/TV ads in the Baltimore area; digital media available at cannabis.maryland.gov
- Point-of-Sale materials distributed to all licensed dispensaries this month
- Broader public education campaign (radio, tv, social media) beginning before July 1. Focus is on impaired driving, purchase and possession limits, and safe and responsible use.



Dosage Guidelines for Beginners*

Flower
Dose: 1 inhalation
Onset: 1-10 minutes
Duration: 1-6 hours

Vapes
Dose: 1 inhalation
Onset: 1-10 minutes
Duration: 1-6 hours

Edibles
Dose: 2.5 mg THC
Onset: 1-2 hours
Duration: 4-24 hours

Liquids/Beverages
Dose: 2.5 mg THC
Onset: 1-2 hours
Duration: 4-24 hours

*Suggested to avoid overconsumption. Formal guidelines have not been established.

Edibles Fast Facts

• Always check the amount of THC on the label – edibles can look identical but have different strengths!

• You may need to cut an edible in half or quarters to consume the dose you want

• Effects from edibles are often delayed and last longer than smoking or vaping cannabis

Cannabis Experience

It's not just how much THC you take that determines how high you feel. The following can affect each experience:

Metabolism

How full your stomach is

How often you consume

Current mood

Cannabinoid and terpene profile

Alcohol or other substances consumed

Type and potency of product

Where you are

Tips For A Safer Cannabis Experience

Do

- ✓ Purchase regulated and tested cannabis from a licensed dispensary
- ✓ Start with a low dose (1-2 puffs or 2.5 mg THC) and wait at least a couple hours before consuming more
- ✓ Ask your healthcare provider if you have medical concerns

Don't

- ✗ Mix cannabis with alcohol, tobacco, or other intoxicants or stimulants
- ✗ Drive after consuming cannabis
- ✗ Smoke in public spaces

Hey Maryland. DID YOU KNOW?

BE INFORMED. BE RESPONSIBLE. BE SAFE.

GUIDE TO ADULT-USE CANNABIS IN MARYLAND

Know the Laws

PURCHASE & POSSESSION
Adults 21+ with valid ID can purchase and possess up to:
• 1.5 ounces of flower
• 12 grams of concentrates
• Edible products up to 750 mg THC

EMPLOYMENT
Check with your employer about their policies. The new law does not prevent employers from drug testing employees.

HOME GROW
Adults 21+ can grow 2 indoor plants per household, out of view. Landlords and property managers may have restrictions.

DUI
If you feel different, you drive different. Driving under the influence of cannabis is illegal and can lead to a DUI.

KEEP IN-STATE
Cannabis is federally illegal. This means you can't:
• Use or possess on federal property (parks, military bases, etc.)
• Mail any cannabis product
• Transport it across state lines

RESALE
It is illegal for anyone other than a licensed dispensary to sell cannabis.

Use Responsibly

START LOW, GO SLOW
Start with a low dose and wait to feel the effects before using more. Effects can vary from person to person and day to day. It may take 2 hours or more for edibles to "kick-in."

SMOKE-FREE SPACES
Cannabis can't be smoked in public spaces, including streets and sidewalks, parks and schools, bars and restaurants, and on public transportation.

SAFE STORAGE
Keep all cannabis products:
• Locked up
• Out of reach and out of sight
• In their original child-resistant packaging

If you have consumed too much, call the Maryland Poison Center, 800-222-1222.

MCA MARYLAND CANNABIS ADMINISTRATION

To learn more visit: cannabis.maryland.gov



Thank you

Additional information

cannabis.maryland.gov

Questions?

policy.mmcc@maryland.gov

OR

Phone: 410-487-8100 or 1-844-421-2571